ZION'S LAMENTATION.

1790

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A

SERMON

OCCASIONED BY THE

MUCH LAMENTED DEATH OF THE

Rev. *JOSEPH EASTERBROOK*,

Vicar of *Temple* and *Ordinary* of *Newgate*,

In the City of BRISTOL,

Who departed this Life *January* 21, 1791.

Preached JANUARY 30, 1791,

By the Rev. *JOHN HEY*,

MINISTER of CASTLE-GREEN MEETING.

Published by particular Request.

"*The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance.*"

BRISTOL:

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

DEDICATION.

To the INHABITANTS *of* TEMPLE PARISH, *BRISTOL.*

Dear Friends,

THE *following plain Diſcourſe, at firſt delivered without the leaſt thought of printing it, now appears in public in conſequence of repeated ſolicitations, both oral and written.—As an attempt to improve that ſolemn and affecting event, by which your much honored Miniſter has been removed from you, it will not (it is preſumed) be unacceptable.*

I cannot help feeling on this occaſion, ſome painful emotions, ariſing from a conſideration of the great loſs, which the public in general, and you in particular, *muſt ſuſtain, in having a perſon ſo eminently uſeful, taken away.—This loſs, indeed, you have in ſome meaſure already felt in conſequence of a protracted affliction under which your beloved Paſtor languiſhed, and by which you ſuffered a ſuſpenſion of his miniſterial labors, for ſome time prior to his diſſolution.—*

hope ſhed a luſtre on the gloomy Providence, and ye were ready to rejoice in the pleaſing proſpect of having him reſtored to you again.—Now the ſcene is totally changed, "Calamity has trampled on the proſpect of relief," and by the intervention of Death all your fond expectations are entomb'd in dark oblivion.—But forgive this remark, my dear Friends, I don't mean to aggravate your fruitleſs ſorrow; 'tis my province to attempt ſomething which may have a tendency to relieve your dejected minds, and prove of everlaſting utility to your ſouls.—This attempt has been made in the following Diſcourſe, which is now put into your hands.—May the GOD OF ALL GRACE *crown it and you with his* Bleſſing, *and receive all the* Praiſe.

So prays,

Your affectionate Friend,

JOHN HEY.

DOVE-STREET, *Briſtol, Feb.* 18, 1791.

PSALM xii. 1.

Help LORD; for the godly man ceaſeth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

ALL the diſpenſations of Divine Providence reſult from infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, therefore muſt neceſſarily be right; and when properly regarded, cannot fail of producing the moſt beneficial effects.—'Tis true, they are greatly diverſified in their nature and appearances; becauſe intended to operate in various ways. Some are delightfully auſpicious, opening to view the moſt charming proſpects; ſuch was that by which the incarnate SAVIOUR was uſhered into our World, when the Angelic Hoſts, thoſe Morning Stars ſang together; and the Sons of GOD on the Earth, ſhouted for joy.—Others are tenebrious and gloomy; portending ſorrow and diſtreſs: ſuch are thoſe, by which perſons eminent for piety and uſefulneſs,

are cut off in the midſt of their days. Hence the Prophet *Eliſha*, lamented the removal of his aſcending Maſter *Elijah*; exclaiming, " My father, my father, the " chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen " thereof." 2 *Kings* 2. xii. It ſeems *Eliſha* thought that his illuſtrious predeceſſor, was of far greater uſe in the preſervation of *Iſrael*, by his example, counſel, and powerful pleadings with GOD in prayer, than thouſands of chariots and horſemen could be; and therefore bewailed his departure. And is it not ſtill matter of lamentation, when men, eminent for their ſervices in the Church, and in the World, are taken away? An event of this kind, we are called to notice at this time: and to an occurrence of this nature, the ſacred penman refers in our text,— " Help LORD; for the godly man ceaſeth, " for the faithful fail from among the " children of men."

The inſpired author of this Pſalm, was *David*, the celebrated King of *Iſrael*. On what particular occaſion he wrote it, is not eaſy to aſcertain; nor is it material

for us to know. His design therein, is manifestly to regret the dissolution, and departure, of good men; and also to deplore the wickedness and perfidy of those who survived.--We shall confine our regards to the first of these particulars, which is expressly included in the words we have selected, as the ground of the following Discourse. In expatiating on the subject, we will endeavour, under divine assistance, to consider

I. The Character here applied to the Saints of GOD; and which is particularly suited to the zealous and laborious Ministers of JESUS CHRIST.

II. What we are to understand by their failing and ceasing from among the children of men.

III. That this is frequently a just cause of lamentation.

IV. What source of relief we have to repair to; and what means we should make use of, on such sorrowful occasions.

After enlarging on the different particulars ſpecified, we deſign to conſider their application to the ſtate and character of our dear deceaſed Friend, the Rev. Mr. EASTERBROOK, and alſo their ſuitability to that event of Providence by which our Rev. Brother has been removed from us, and which claims our moſt ſolemn attention at this time.—Having premiſed this; let us proceed

I. To notice the Character here applied to the Saints of GOD, and which is eminently ſuited to the zealous, and laborious Miniſters of the Goſpel; they are ſtiled, "*godly* and *faithful*."

1. They are godly.—This is expreſſive of their piety towards GOD; which immediately flows from a participation of the Divine Nature.—And however this ſacred character, may be blaſphemed by the impious and profane; who with a contemptuous ſneer, deride the ſervants of GOD, by terming them "godly ones," in a way of reproach; yet, it is indiſputably one of the moſt exalted characters, that

can dignify and enoble the ſons of men.—'Tis not an empty, unmeaning title: it ſtands connected with unnumbered bleſſings; and compriſes all that is important, and glorious: all that an enlightened mind can deſire: all that an immortal ſoul can poſſibly enjoy; for "godlineſs is profitable for all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

This appellation, when applied to the righteous in general, denotes, not only their intereſt in the divine favor, but alſo their conformity to the bleſſed GOD. Having "beheld" in the Goſpel, "as in a glaſs, the glory of the LORD," they "are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." In this happy ſtate, of goſpel liberty and grace, they ſtand poſſeſſed of an holy confidence in GOD their SAVIOUR. His immaculate Righteouſneſs, and ineſtimably precious Blood; his unfailing Promiſe, and Almighty Power; his inviolable Faithfulneſs, and everlaſting Love, are the grand objects of their faith, and

the ſole ground of their truſt. On theſe, the godly man founds his hope, and exults, in certain proſpect of a bliſsful immortality.

Another property found in the heirs of Salvation, is fervent love to GOD. On him their ſupreme affections are placed; to him their warmeſt deſires aſcend; and the language of this their ſuperlative regard is, "Whom have I in Heaven but "thee? and there is none upon Earth I "deſire beſide thee." This ſacred flame of devout affection, is not alway the ſame; it is augmented or diminiſhed in proportion as the cheering gales of the Holy Spirit are afforded, or withheld.—Nevertheleſs, in the ſaints 'tis *real* at all times; and *Peter's* confeſſion (with a little alteration) will ſuit them when at the loweſt ebb, "LORD thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I [deſire] to love thee." There is one infallible evidence of love to GOD which every real Chriſtian enjoys; viz. they cannot be ſatisfied, or happy, without the manifeſtations of the Divine Preſence to their ſouls: the external privileges of the Goſpel, and the various in-

ſtitutions

ſtitutions which God has eſtabliſhed in his Church, are but as dry breaſts, without the light of his countenance, and the heart-cheering conſolations of his Spirit.

Theſe holy principles of ſacred Knowledge, Faith and Love, are productive of devotedneſs to God.—The godly man is never more happy, than when "running "in the way of divine commands with an "enlarged heart."—Thoſe who deem the ſervice of God an unpleaſant taſk, betray their want of love to him.—The ſubjects of divine Grace experience the greateſt liberty, when moſt zealouſly engaged in the ſervice of their Lord and Maſter.—Enlargement in prayer;—fervency in praiſe;—alacrity of ſpirit in attending the worſhip of God;—and a pious zeal in diſcharging the various duties of life, are what the Saints delight in.

Theſe are the leading traits in a godly man's character; and by them we may judge of our ſtate.——Here then, my dear hearers, ler me arreſt your attention for a moment, and enquire,—Are you recipients

recipients of this Grace? And is this character applicable to you? Have you been enlightened by the Spirit of GOD? Do you in conſequence thereof diſcover your depravity, wretchedneſs and guilt?—What do you know of JESUS CHRIST? Are you perſuaded that He is the only Saviour of guilty ruin'd men? Are you depending alone on Him for pardon, holineſs and eternal life? Is he formed in your hearts the Hope of Glory? Do you ſincerely love his precious name, word and ways? Is it your hearts' deſire and prayer to GOD that you may walk in newneſs of life, and be conſcientiouſly devoted to his ſervice and praiſe? If ſo, happy are ye, for "the Spirit of Glory and of GOD "reſteth upon you." All hail! ye ſons and daughters of the Almighty—your ſins are all forgiven, your ſouls are divinely chang'd—your trials are ſanctified—all your enemies ſhall be conquer'd and ſlain—your end ſhall be peace, and unutterable glory will crown your immortal exiſtence, in the bright manſions of eternal delight: for the "RIGHTEOUS ſhall ſhine forth as "the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father"

When the character in the Text, is applied to the Miniſters of the everlaſting Goſpel; we may conſider it as deſcriptive, not only of their piety, but alſo of their office and work:—They ſuſtain the divine Image as Chriſtians: As Miniſters they exhibit it to public view; and ſhine as lights in a benighted world.—By purity of doctrine, integrity of life, and holineſs of converſation, they zealouſly endeavor to bring deluded ſinners from the confines of Hell, into the paths of peace and ſafety, and conduct them through all the intricate mazes of the preſent life, to the bright realms of unbeclouded day.

2. Saints are denominated not only "godly" but "faithful".—This we apprehend is deſcriptive of their integrity and uprightneſs among men. And in this ſenſe "the righteous is more excellent "than his neighbour." Where divine Grace is found in the heart, integrity will manifeſt itſelf in the life.—'Tis too true, ſome may pretend to godlineſs who are deſtitute even of common honeſty; but this will operate to their ſhame, for diſ-

honeſt, inſincere, faithleſs Profeſſors, are the moſt hateful characters that can be found; and notwithſtanding their loud pretenſions to religion, they are now by the great GOD claſſed with the ungodly, and will ſoon (if found and ſpeedy repentance prevent not) be numbered with the damned.—But the man whoſe heart is right with GOD, is faithful, and the rectitude of his mind ſheds a luſtre on all the tranſactions of his life; he walks honeſtly as in the day, his conſcience bearing him witneſs, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, he has his converſation in the world.

This epithet is not unfrequently applied to Miniſters in particular, as Ambaſſadors of JESUS the PRINCE of PEACE. Hence *Timothy*, *Tychicus*, and *Epaphras*, are ſeverally ſtiled "faithful," and "faithful "Miniſters in the LORD." The term in this connexion, imports fidelity, fortitude, and ſtability, all which are indiſpenſibly requiſite to a proper diſcharge of their highly important work.—Regardleſs of the frowns, and unbiaſed by the enchant-

ing ſmiles of men; they deſire as Stewards of the myſteries of God, to be faithful; faithful in warning the ungodly, and in reproving the careleſs;—faithful in detecting the hypocrite, and in expoſing to view the fallacious, ill-founded hopes of the ſelf-righteous, ſelf-deluded Moraliſt; faithful in declaring the whole Counſel of God, ſo far as their knowledge and abilities extend. — And notwithſtanding the malevolence of perſecuting tongues; and the difficulties of oppoſition that lie in their way; yet, ſupported by their divine Maſter, and inſpired with firmneſs, and magnanimity of mind, they reſolutely perſevere, finiſh their courſe with joy, and receive their promiſed bliſsful reward.

II. We proceed to conſider what is intended by failing and ceaſing from among the children of men.

While meditating on this part of the ſubject, we ſhall anticipate in theory at leaſt, what we muſt ſhortly feel in all its awful reality, viz. The execution of that alarming ſentence which has paſſed on

Adam's guilty race, "DUST THOU ART, "AND TO DUST THOU SHALT RETURN." —This great, this infinitely important change, is repreſented under a variety of images in the ORACLES of GOD, ſome of which are pleaſing, others terrific.—In reference to the highly favor'd objects of divine mercy, as deſcribed above; it is exhibited under the relieving and comfortable ideas of journeying, removing, ſleeping, failing, ceaſing from labor and ſorrow, as in our text, and of meeting GOD to baſk in the beams of his ETERNAL LOVE.—Viewing it in this light, 'tis no wonder to hear an exulting, dying chriſtian ſing,

Sweet Sleep! Death's image, to thine arms I fly;
Pleas'd without life to live,—glad without Death to die.

Death as it relates to the ungodly, the finally impenitent, is diſplay'd in the moſt frightful colors. Theſe are ſaid to be driven away in their wickedneſs—caſt into priſon—into outer darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.—Death in this view is tremendous indeed! O my dear friends, don't you feel its vaſt im-

portance? Are you not alarm'd at the thought of dying in ſin? Dying hopeleſs and miſerable?—How awful will it be for you, any of you to have lived only to die at laſt, inveloped in clouds of guilt and darkneſs, and immerſed in black deſpair. "O that ye were wiſe, that ye would "conſider your latter end;" and ſpeedily "fly to the ATONING SAVIOR for pardon, "holineſs, and eternal life."

To fail then, according to our text, is to bid a final adieu to all terrene enjoyments. "We brought nothing into this "world, and it is certain we can carry "nothing out."—To fail is to take a long farewell of our deareſt friends;—our fond, affectionate relatives; yea, our moſt delightful companions, in whoſe engaging ſociety we have ſo often reaped both profit and pleaſure, muſt all be left behind,—and we muſt ceaſe to participate the ſweets of friendſhip, and the joys of ſenſe: But no matter, if we reſign Earth for Heaven, and exchange a ſtate of imperfection and ſorrow for a ſtate of immortal Purity and Joy.—Then to die will be

In this ſenſe Miniſters alſo fail and ceaſe.—"Your Fathers where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?" Ah no,—but like the Prieſts of GOD in former ages, "they are not ſuffered to "continue by reaſon of death;"—they are earthen veſſels, and therefore, notwithſtanding their eminence and uſefulneſs in the Church of CHRIST, like others they are liable to the unrelenting ſtroke, and in their turn retire into the ſilent tomb.—When this takes place they CEASE—ceaſe to blow the ſilver trumpet of the everlaſting Goſpel;—ceaſe to inſtruct the ignorant, to warn the unruly; to comfort the feeble minded; and to ſupport the weak, by their pious miniſtrations—They no longer viſit the habitations of affliction and ſorrow, no more tread the threſhold of poverty and wretchedneſs, to adminiſter relief to the ſons and daughters of miſery and want—They ceaſe to exhibit examples of purity, integrity and holineſs; except in this reſpect, that being dead they yet ſpeak, ſaying, "BE YE FOL-"LOWERS OF US, AS WE HAVE BEEN OF "CHRIST."—Here, you cannot but diſ-

cover we have more immediate reference to our dear departed Friend and Brother; —but at preſent ſhall wave ſaying more, and reſume an attention to his character in its proper place.

In the interim we ſhall go on to obſerve,

III. That when ſuch *godly, faithful* Miniſters are cut off in the midſt of their days, and removed from their ſeveral ſpheres of extenſive uſefulneſs, 'tis a juſt cauſe of lamentation to the Church of GOD.

To ſee the venerable ſervant of GOD, whoſe multiplied years and faithful labors command reſpect; to ſee *him* devoutly retiring from ſcenes of public ſervice; and to hear the reverend Champion for evangelic Truth, with expreſſions of gratitude to his adorable Maſter for paſt aſſiſtance and ſucceſs, ſaying, "LORD, now letteſt thou "thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine "eyes have ſeen," my heart has felt, and my tongue has proclaimed "thy" great "Salvation;" this, I ſay, is awfully pleaſing, and what we muſt naturally expect:

But when the irreſiſtible hand of Death arreſts the illuſtrious Heralds of ſovereign Grace in their grand career of uſefulneſs, and ſwiftly conſigns them to the ſilent chambers of the darkſom tomb; 'tis alarming, and appears as if the LORD had a controverſy with us.* Whether the preſent Providence ought to be viewed in this light, we will not attempt to determine; but this we may ſafely affirm, that if Zion of old wept becauſe her political "Elders ceaſed from the gate," certainly Zion may now lament the removal of her faithful ſpiritual Watchmen, under ſuch peculiarly painful circumſtances.—The great Apoſtle *Paul* declared to his beloved Philippians, that if he had loſt his companion in labor, *Epaphroditus*, who was their meſſenger, and who had been ſick for a time, he ſhould have

* 'Tis remarkable, that in the ſpace of about two years and five months, ſeveral eminent Miniſters, in *Briſtol* and its vicinity, nearly in the prime of life, have been removed by Death; viz. The Rev. Mr. HOSKINS, my late honored predeceſſor; the Rev. Mr. NEWTON, at the *Pithay*; the Rev. Mr. TUPPEN, of *Bath*; and now the Rev. Mr. EASTERBROOK.—Not to mention our late Friend the Rev. Mr. PARSONS, of *Bath*, who indeed died

have had ſorrow upon ſorrow; ſomething, we may ſuppoſe, like what the Elders of the Epheſian Church felt when on parting with *Paul* himſelf, they "wept ſore," lamenting "moſt of all that they ſhould ſee his face no more."—And now, I doubt not, many in this large pariſh are affected in a ſimilar way; ſorrowing deeply becauſe they ſhall ſee the face, hear the voice, and participate the ſweetneſs of that relief their dear departed Paſtor uſed to bring, *no more*.

But this is not all—When ſuch eminently pious, and uſeful Characters are taken away, the Church may be ſaid to have loſt ſo much of the Spirit of CHRIST as they poſſeſſed; and ſo much influence in the Court of Heaven as they might have, while in a praying ſtate below, and when engag'd in fervent and importunate ſupplications at a Throne of Grace.

The benefit of their living example is now no more; and their loſs in every view, perhaps may never be fully repaired; *eſpecially in that particular Circuit* in which

the Providence of GOD had placed them. —On theſe, and other accounts, their departure is to be regretted by all who are properly concerned for the welfare of Zion, and earneſtly long for the extenſion of the Divine REDEEMER's Kingdom.

How are your minds affected (my dear friends) with this ſolemn event? Do you hear the voice of GOD in this Providence? Are you properly ſenſible of the loſs you have ſuſtained? And are you ſuitably impreſſed on the occaſion? — Should you remain unmoved under this awakening diſpenſation, how hard muſt your hearts be!---Ah, ye wretched trifiers, who are ſporting with your own deceivings, and lulling yourſelves to ſleep in the wanton lap of luxury and diſſipation, how inexpreſſibly awful muſt your condemnation be, if neither the zealous labors of your Miniſter's active life, nor the ſolemn event of his lamented death, ſhould operate to your converſion and reformation!--- Oh think and tremble, ſeriouſly conſider, and return to HIM by whom you muſt be judged at the laſt tremendous day.

If

If you find your hearts ſuitably affected on the mournful occaſion, and properly humbled before GOD under the bereaving ſtroke, then, notwithſtanding the gloom which ſurrounds the diſpenſation, you may reap much ſpiritual profit, for the LORD can and will comfort the mourners in Zion, in their deepeſt diſtreſſes;—and this is

IV. What we are to attend to; viz. To point out what ſource of relief we have to repair to; and what means we ought to make uſe of on ſuch ſorrowful occaſions.

1. Our only ſource of relief, is the unbounded goodneſs of GOD, exhibited in the precious Promiſes of his bleſſed Word. —And to this fountain of conſolation, gracious perſons in all ages have had recourſe, and found ſuccor. — Amid the darkneſs of frowning Providences—manifold afflictions, and alarming revolutions of time;—And under the painful ſight of expiring Friends, and departing Miniſters, they have "looked unto the LORD, their faces have been lightened," and their

weary ſpirits ſweetly refreſhed, by drinking of thoſe gladdening "Streams which perpetually flow, to exhilerate and comfort the Church of GOD."—How happy, ineffably happy are they who have an intereſt in the infinite Favor of JEHOVAH, and are living on his Fulneſs!—Surely they need not languiſh for want of conſolation:—How can they be poor, who have GOD for their portion?—How can they be miſerable, who have CHRIST for their comfort?——To JESUS then (ye believing hearers), to JESUS THE GREAT REDEEMER we would direct your views, under this bereaving Providence: Though Miniſters die, yet the IMMORTAL SAVIOR lives.—He is the grand Fountain of light and comfort, and the unfailing ſource of ſupply.—To him as the great Head of the Church, you muſt look, both for ſpiritual comforts, and a ſuitable Succeſſor of your late worthy *Paſtor*—this includes

2. The mean recommended for obtaining the deſired relief, viz. PRAYER; an example of which we have in our text,—"Help LORD; for the godly man ceaſeth,

"for the faithful fail," &c.—On this occaſion, nothing can be done effectually, towards repairing the breach, without the interpoſition of the divine Hand.—All the men in the World cannot make a faithful, zealous, laborious Miniſter of JESUS CHRIST.—It is the prerogative of the LORD alone, to raiſe up;—qualify;—and ſend forth uſeful labourers into his vineyard—And this he does, under the wiſe regulations ſpecified in his Word; and ordained in his Providence.---The advantages of human literature are great; but the grand qualification, where good natural abilities are poſſeſſed, is DIVINE GRACE IN THE HEART---Such as are thus furniſhed and ſent forth, are called Paſtors after GOD's own Heart; Prophets or Meſſengers of his own ſending; and Stars which he himſelf has fixed in the hemiſphere of his Church.——For ſuch a *Paſtor* do you pray; one who may go in and out before you, and feed you with ſound knowledge and underſtanding.---Nor are you to ceaſe from praying till you ceaſe from breathing, becauſe this is the mean which GOD has graciouſly appointed for

obtaining all needful ſupplies of grace, with eternal glory at laſt.

In improving the ſubject thus briefly diſcuſſed, we obſerve

1. That what has been advanced relative to the piety and fidelity of *real Chriſtians* in general, and *godly Miniſters* in particular, may with great propriety be applied to the ſtate and character of our valuable and lately deceaſed Friend.

His *Piety towards GOD* was very exemplary. All who knew him are conſtrained to acknowledge, "certainly he "was a righteous man."—Having happily imbibed much of the Spirit of his divine Maſter; he was meek, humble, and devout.—The love of GOD was ſhed abroad in his heart, and the language of Prayer and Praiſe dwelt on his lips—The ardor and fervency of his devotion in the ſervice of GOD, ye who have united with him in religious worſhip muſt know: While bending with you in ſolemn adoration before the Mercy-ſeat of GOD; his heart

heart has caught the hallow'd flame, an his tongue has joyfully led the ſacred ſervices of the day—Thus he was fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the LORD.——To his piety we may add

His *Fidelity* — unmoved by the banter of reviling tongues; undiſmayed with the impious ſcoffs of ungodly men; he boldly aſſerted the grand fundamental Truths of GOD—declaring the univerſal depravity of the human heart; the inſufficiency of human merit in point of acceptance with JEHOVAH; and the indiſpenſible neceſſity of regeneration and evangelic holineſs in order to eternal life and happineſs.—And ſo perfectly conſcious, was our Rev. Brother of his undiſſembled integrity and ſincerity, in the diſcharge of his important office, that (and a higher degree of confidence can ſcarcely be conceived) he rejoiced in proſpect of Judgment, not doubting the approbation of his LORD and Maſter in that finally deciſive day—This confidence was not founded on the idea of merit, but on the precious Blood and Righteouſneſs of JESUS, as will by and

Nor was his *Diligence* leſs worthy of commendation—Actuated by motives of pious zeal and affection, he was indefatigable in accompliſhing the duties of his paſtoral office. In public, in private, he was inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; being ſtedfaſt, unmovable, and abounding in the work of the LORD; not weary in well-doing, but delighting in thoſe labors of love in which he was ſo readily engaged, and to which he was ſo univerſally devoted.

Another prominent feature in the character of our honored Brother, was his extenſive *Charity* — "He was ready to diſtribute, and willing to communicate." The munificence of his heart was like a full fountain; diffuſing its copious ſtreams, and flowing in different directions, it conveyed the balm of ſweet relief to many a wretched habitation, filled the hungry with good things, and made the mourning widow's heart to ſing for joy.

The *Candor* and *Liberality* of his mind, added to the number of thoſe amiable

qualities

qualities which he poſſeſſed—Though a Miniſter of the eſtabliſhed Church, yet he manifeſted a great degree of good will and affection for thoſe of his Brethren in the Miniſtry, who from motives of conſcience, thought proper to diſſent from him. A fuller proof of this his *diſintereſtedneſs* and *candor* we can ſcarcely wiſh for, than that which he gave in expreſſing his approbation and joy, when this Chapel was firſt opened, for the purpoſe of preaching the Goſpel to the poor, and others in his pariſh who were diſpoſed to attend.* So happy was he, to ſee Zion flouriſh, by whatever means, or by whomſoever the

* When our late dear Friend, the Rev. Mr. HOSKINS had formed a deſign of opening *Temple Chapel*, with an intention of preaching lectures to the poor in that part of the city—he very properly wrote to Mr. EASTERBROOK, mentioning his deſign; and in reply received the following kind, affectionate Letter:—

DEAR SIR,

I muſt beg your acceptance of my warmeſt acknowledgments for the very friendly and obliging Letter, which I yeſterday received from you.—Your deſign is truly excellent, and will doubtleſs be conſidered as matter of thankſgiving to the Head of the Church, by all its real Members, within reach of the

LORD thought proper to ſend.——O for more of this godlike ſpirit in all who profeſs to love the dear LORD JESUS.

As his valuable life was a ſcene of general uſefulneſs, and devoted to the public good; ſo his death was crowned with ſerenity, peace and joy.---His affliction was protracted, and very painful; which he ſuſtained with great conſtancy and fortitude.—He obſerved to a Friend a little prior to his diſſolution, that he thought his pain very inconſiderable when he reflected on the agonies and ſufferings which his once crucified LORD had endured for him.—To another Friend, (who frequently viſited him, and minuted down what he uttered) he ſaid "I have fled to the

report of your labors. It is my heart's deſire, and prayer to GOD for you, that *your bow may abide in ſtrength* for many years to come, and that *the pleaſure of the LORD may proſper in your hand*.

I remain, dear Sir,
Your affectionate, and
grateful humble ſervant,
JOSEPH EASTERBROOK.

BRISTOL, *Temple-ſtreet*,
July 16, 1785.

" the city of refuge, where the manſlayer " cannot reach me. Oh tell my friends " to fly to this city of refuge. What " ſhould I have done all this while, with " death ſtaring me in the face, if I had " not fled to JESUS for refuge?" * At another time being aſked how he did, he replied, " I am a little better; and ſome- " times when I am a little better, I think " the LORD is about to raiſe me up again, " and make me uſeful for him; and when " I am worſe, then I conclude he is going " to take me home; SO IT IS ALL WELL." —At another time he ſeemed to be in a tranſport of joy, and ſaid, " I am now " happy; all my earthly and heavenly " affairs are ſettled; the LORD never leaves " nor forſakes me; not a cloud ariſes be- " tween; I AM ALL PEACE WITHIN, I " LIVE ABOVE!"—— Soon after this our dear and reverend Brother ended his War- fare—triumphed glorioufly over Death— aſcended to Glory, and exultingly entered the Joy of his LORD.——Thus to live,

* This evinces what was hinted above, viz. That our departed Friend built his Hope of Heaven on JESUS alone.

how amiable!——Thus to die, how delightful!

2. From hence we diſcover ſomething of what vital godlineſs can do for us.—That Religion is worth having indeed which conſtitutes us holy in life, and happy in death.—And here we beg leave to obſerve, that thoſe who devoutly embrace that ſyſtem which propoſes Salvation by free unmerited Grace, and conſcientiouſly adhere to the doctrines of the Croſs of JESUS, generally die happy; and ſome of them, EXULTING in proſpect of GLORY. Surely we cannot deem this enthuſiaſm and deluſion.—Sceptics, we know have abſurdly ſuppoſed that theſe extacies of joy, reſult from a lively flow of the animal ſpirits, or a briſk circulation of the blood. But can this be the caſe when langor and diſeaſe invade the whole ſyſtem? when heart and fleſh are failing? Surely not.—Bleſſed be GOD, we have the moſt ſatisfactory proofs that theſe conſolations are divine;—beſide, the teſtimony of faithful dying *Chriſtians* ought to be believed before that of living *Infidels*. And in this

we rejoice, that after all that the enemies of Goſpel Truth can ſay, "We KNOW "whom we have believed, and are PER-"SUADED that he will keep that which "we have committed to him againſt that "day."

3. Is it your happineſs, my Friends, to experience the influence of this Religion in your hearts?—To come immediately to the point;—Have you been divinely changed by the transforming power of the Holy Ghoſt?—This grand requiſition is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. JESUS the great JUDGE of all, has repeatedly declared, "Except a man be born again, he "cannot ſee the kingdom of GOD." If this important change has paſſed upon you, it will produce, ſorrow for ſin, deep humiliation before GOD, and an affecting concern for the ſalvation of your immortal ſouls;—if renewed by Grace, you will "count all things but loſs for the excel-"lency of the knowledge of CHRIST "JESUS the LORD." Your confidence will center in Him—your love will abound towards Him—and it will be the grand

buſineſs of your lives to live in his fear, and walk in his ways.

Perhaps ſome of my hearers are totally indifferent to theſe momentous realities. And notwithſtanding the warnings of Providence—the remonſtrances of conſcience ---the thunders of Sinai---and the invitations of mercy, are ſtill perſevering in ſin, and living without God and without hope in the world.---Ah! ye rugged ſons of impiety and rebellion, what will ye do when the pangs of death ſhall ſeize you? What will ye do when the awful trump of God ſhall ſummon you to his dread tribunal?---For aught we know, your departed Miniſter may be gone before to be a ſwift witneſs againſt you.---In giving up his account to God, he may have already reported reſpecting you,---That he has called, but ye refuſed; he has often ſtretched forth his hands in preaching, and his heart in praying, but ye have not regarded.---Oh! Sirs, ſoon may the awful mandate be iſſued forth from the throne of God againſt you, "Cut them down, "why cumber they the ground!"---Is it

not high time for you to awake?---Eternal GOD! diſplay thy Mercy and Power, rouſe theſe careleſs Sinners from their fatal ſlumbers, fix an arrow of ſaving conviction in their hearts, that they may ſpeedily fly from the wrath to come.

4. How thankful ſhould we be for faithful Miniſters, and how ſolicitous to improve the advantages we enjoy under them.---Let us take care, leſt, by deſpiſing their labors, and pouring contempt on their miniſtrations by a non-attendance on them, we weaken their hands, and cauſe them to weep in ſecret, and ſay, "It is better for me to die than "live."—The more zealous and faithful Miniſters are, the more we ſhould love them; remembering thoſe are our beſt friends, who take moſt pains to ſave us from ruin, and bring us to glory.

Finally.—Let us endeavour to realize our own approaching diſſolution—After a few more fleeting periods are elapſed, we alſo muſt expire in the cold embraces of death.—Mounted on the wings of time,

we fly with unabating rapidity, to the dark receſſes of the gloomy grave.——Solemn thought! How ſhould it moderate our attachment to all terreſtial things!—Happy conſideration! How ſhould it relieve our minds under all the painful anxieties of the preſent ſtate!——Rejoice ye Heirs of eternal Salvation, for the day, the delightful day of your Redemption draweth nigh. Soon, very ſoon, you ſhall bid an everlaſting adieu to all the calamities of this ſinful life, and enter the bleſt aſylum of never-ending Felicity and Repoſe.

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'Till that joyful moment arrives, be found looking to JESUS; commit your bodies and ſouls with all their concerns into his hands, and reſolutely preſs forward in the ways and work of GOD. Keep your believing eyes ſtedfaſtly fixed on the Crown of Life---Let your converſation be in Heaven---And never ceaſe looking for that bleſſed hope, the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our SAVIOR, the LORD JESUS CHRIST—And then when He appears, ye alſo ſhall appear with him in glory.